

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:

receiving from a remote monitoring device an indication of a physiological anomaly associated with a patient;

selecting at least one remote expert from a plurality of potential remote experts to provide an opinion regarding the anomaly;

determining at least one compensation amount to be provided to at the least one of the at least one selected remote experts in exchange for the opinion; and

causing a communication with the at least one selected remote expert to be initiated, wherein the communication comprises a request for the opinion in exchange for the compensation amount.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the remote monitoring device is a portable device.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of selecting comprises:

selecting, based on the received indication, at least one remote expert from a plurality of remote experts to provide an opinion regarding the anomaly.

4. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

receiving the opinion from the at least one selected remote expert after the step of causing the communication; and

providing a diagnosis to the patient based on the opinion.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of selecting comprises:

determining at least one of at least one patient preference and at least one patient parameter associated with the patient;

determining at least one expert criterion associated with each of the plurality of potential experts; and

selecting at least one expert from the plurality of experts based on a comparison of:

8 the at least one of the at least one patient preference and the at least
9 one patient parameter to:
10 the at least one expert criterion.

1 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of selecting comprises:
2 determining an area of medicine associated with the anomaly; and
3 selecting at least one expert from the plurality of potential experts
4 that practices in the area of medicine.

1 7. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of determining at least one
2 compensation amount comprises:
3 selecting at least one compensation amount based on a minimum
4 compensation amount previously agreed to by the at least one expert.

1 8. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of determining at least one
2 compensation amount comprises:
3 determining at least one compensation amount based on at least one of
4 (i) a current time of day;
5 (ii) information associated with the patient;
6 (iii) information associated with the at least one expert;
7 (iv) an area of medicine associated with the anomaly;
8 (v) an area of medicine associated with the at least one expert;
9 (vi) at least one compensation amount previously offered to at
10 least one expert from the plurality of potential experts;
11 (vii) at least one compensation amount previously accepted by at
12 least one expert from the plurality of potential experts;
13 (viii) whether the expert has previously provided an opinion
14 regarding the patient; and
15 (ix) a number of experts selected.

1 9. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

2 determining that none of the selected experts has responded
3 affirmatively to the transmitted request;
4 determining an increased compensation amount for at least one of
5 the selected experts; and
6 causing a communication to be initiated with the at least one expert
7 wherein an indication of the increased compensation amount is transmitted.

1 10. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

2 receiving a response indicating a willingness to provide an opinion
3 in exchange for the compensation amount from at least one of the selected experts;
4 and

5 causing data indicating the anomaly to be provided to the at least
6 one expert who responded.

1 11. The method of claim 10 wherein the step of causing data indicating the
2 anomaly to be provided comprises:

3 transmitting data indicative of the anomaly to the at least one expert
4 who responded.

1 12. The method of claim 10 wherein the step of causing data indicating the
2 anomaly to be provided comprises:

3 providing, to the at least one expert who responded, access to the
4 data indicating the anomaly via at least one of an internet and an intranet site.

1 13. The method of claim 10 further comprising:

2 causing to be provided, to the at least one expert who responded,
3 additional information associated with the patient.

1 14. The method of claim 13 wherein the additional information comprises the
2 patient's medical history.

1 15. The method of claim 1, wherein the expert is at least one of a physician, a
2 nurse, and a medical technician.

1 16. The method of claim 1, wherein the communication includes an indication
2 of the compensation amount.

1 17. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 establishing a direct communication link between the at least one
3 selected expert and the patient.

1 18. A method comprising:
2 receiving, from a remote monitoring device, an indication that a
3 patient is in need of a medical diagnosis;
4 selecting a plurality of remote experts to provide the diagnosis;
5 transmitting physiological data associated with the patient to the
6 plurality of remote experts;
7 receiving at least one opinion from the plurality of experts; and
8 determining an aggregate diagnosis based on the at least one
9 opinion.

1 19. The method of claim 18, further comprising:
2 determining a compensation amount to be provided to each of the
3 plurality of experts; and
4 causing the compensation amount to be provided to each of the
5 plurality of experts in exchange for the at least one opinion.

1 20. The method of claim 19, wherein the step of determining a compensation
2 amount is determined before the step of transmitting and further comprising:
3 transmitting to each of the plurality of experts an indication of the
4 compensation amount as part of a request to provide an opinion; and
5 receiving a response to the request from each of the plurality of
6 experts.

- 1 21. The method of claim 20 further comprising:
2 determining the number of responses that are an acceptance of the
3 offer.
- 1 22. The method of claim 21 further comprising:
2 transmitting the request to additional experts if the number of
3 responses that are an acceptance is below a minimum number.
- 1 23. The method of claim 22 further comprising:
2 determining at least one increased compensation amount; and
3 transmitting a request for the opinion in exchange for the increased
4 compensation amount to at least one of the experts whose response was not an
5 acceptance if the number of responses that are an acceptance is below a minimum
6 number.
- 1 24. The method of claim 18, further comprising:
2 determining a first compensation amount for a first expert that is
3 included in the plurality of experts; and
4 determining a second compensation amount for a second expert that
5 is included in the plurality of experts.
- 1 25. The method of claim 24 wherein the first compensation amount is not the
2 second compensation amount.
- 1 26. The method of claim 18, wherein the step of determining an aggregate
2 diagnosis comprises:
3 receiving an opinion from each one of the plurality of experts;
4 categorizing each of the opinions into a possible diagnosis; and
5 selecting, as the aggregate diagnosis, the possible diagnosis that the most
6 opinions are categorized into.

1 28. The method of claim 18 wherein each of the plurality of experts provides an
2 individual opinion regarding the patient.

1 29. The method of claim 28 wherein at least one of the plurality of experts is
2 unaware that another of the plurality of experts is also providing an opinion
3 regarding the patient.

1 30. The method of claim 18 wherein the plurality of experts communicate with
2 one another before providing an opinion regarding the patient.

1 31. The method of claim 30 wherein the plurality of experts, after
2 communicating with one another, provide a single opinion regarding the patient.

1 32. The method of claim 31 wherein the step of determining an aggregate
2 diagnosis comprises:
3 utilizing the single opinion is used as the aggregate diagnosis.

1 33. The method of claim 18, further comprising:
2 transmitting the aggregate diagnosis to the patient.

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9 receiving, for each response that is an acceptance of the request, the
10 diagnosis for the patient of the request; and
11 causing the compensation amount to be provided to the expert if, at
12 the end of the time period, it is determined that the expert has provided the
13 minimum amount of diagnoses during the time period.

1 35. The method of claim 34, further comprising:
2 selecting the expert from a plurality of remote experts based on a received
3 anomaly and the agreement.

1 36. The method of claim 34, further comprising:
2 causing a reduced compensation amount to be provided to the
3 expert if, at the end of the time period, it is determined that the expert has not
4 provided the minimum amount of diagnoses during the time period.

1 37. The method of claim 34, further comprising:
2 causing the compensation amount to be withheld from the expert if,
3 at the end of the time period, it is determined that the expert has not provided the
4 minimum amount of diagnoses during the time period.

1 38. The method of claim 34, further comprising:
2 incrementing a stored number of diagnoses provided by the expert
3 during the time period when the diagnosis is received.

1 39. The method of claim 38, further comprising:
2 determining that the diagnosis provided is associated with at least
3 one factor that indicates a complication in providing the diagnosis; and
4 incrementing the stored amount of diagnoses by an additional
5 amount based on the at least one factor.

1 40. The method of claim 39, wherein the at least one factor that indicates a
2 complication in providing the diagnosis comprises at least one of:

- 3 (i) a greater than average complexity in the anomaly,
4 (ii) a greater than average amount of time required to provide the
5 diagnosis,
6 (iii) an indication that the expert communicated directly with the patient,
7 and
8 (iv) an indication that the patient's life was saved due to the diagnosis.

1 41. The method of claim 40, further comprising:
2 providing to the expert, at least once during the time period, an
3 indication of a current number of diagnoses provided.

1 42. A method, comprising:
2 establishing an agreement with an entity, wherein the entity agrees to
3 continuously monitor physiological parameters through at least one telemetry
4 device in exchange for compensation;
5 wearing the at least one telemetry device;
6 receiving an indication from the entity that an anomaly has occurred in at
7 least one of the physiological parameters; and
8 receiving a diagnosis based on the anomaly.

1 43. The method of claim 41, wherein the step of receiving a diagnosis
2 comprises:
3 receiving a diagnosis based on the anomaly, wherein the diagnosis
4 includes at least one instruction regarding an action to be taken in accordance with
5 the diagnosis.

1 44. The method of claim 42, wherein the action to be taken comprises:
2 an action to be taken by the entity.

1 45. The method of claim 42, wherein the at least one instruction comprises:
2 an instruction to take a medication.

- 1 46. An apparatus comprising:
2 a storage device; and
3 a processor connected to the storage device,
4 the storage device storing a program for controlling the
5 processor; and
6 the processor operative with the program to:
7 receive from a remote monitoring device an indication of a
8 physiological anomaly associated with a patient;
9 select at least one remote expert from a plurality of potential
10 remote experts to provide an opinion regarding the anomaly;
11 determine at least one compensation amount to be provided
12 to at the least one of the at least one selected remote experts in exchange for the
13 opinion; and
14 cause a communication with the at least one selected remote
15 expert to be initiated, wherein the communication comprises a request for the
16 opinion in exchange for the compensation amount.
- 1 47. A computer readable medium encoded with processing instructions for
2 implementing a method, the method comprising the steps of:
3 receiving from a remote monitoring device an indication of a
4 physiological anomaly associated with a patient;
5 selecting at least one remote expert from a plurality of potential
6 remote experts to provide an opinion regarding the anomaly;
7 determining at least one compensation amount to be provided to at
8 the least one of the at least one selected remote experts in exchange for the opinion;
9 and
10 causing a communication with the at least one selected remote
11 expert to be initiated, wherein the communication comprises a request for the
12 opinion in exchange for the compensation amount.

- 1 48. An apparatus comprising:
2 a storage device; and

3 a processor connected to the storage device,
4 the storage device storing a program for controlling the
5 processor; and
6 the processor operative with the program to:
7 receive, from a remote monitoring device, an indication that
8 a patient is in need of a medical diagnosis;
9 select a plurality of remote experts to provide the diagnosis;
10 transmit physiological data associated with the patient to the
11 plurality of remote experts;
12 receive at least one opinion from the plurality of experts; and
13 determine an aggregate diagnosis based on the at least one
14 opinion.

1 49. A computer readable medium encoded with processing instructions for
2 implementing a method, the method comprising the steps of:
3 receiving, from a remote monitoring device, an indication that a
4 patient is in need of a medical diagnosis;
5 selecting a plurality of remote experts to provide the diagnosis;
6 transmitting physiological data associated with the patient to the
7 plurality of remote experts;
8 receiving at least one opinion from the plurality of experts; and
9 determining an aggregate diagnosis based on the at least one
10 opinion.

1 50. An apparatus comprising:
2 a storage device; and
3 a processor connected to the storage device,
4 the storage device storing a program for controlling the
5 processor; and
6 the processor operative with the program to:

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7 establish an agreement with an expert, wherein the
8 agreement specifies a periodic compensation amount that the expert will receive in
9 exchange for providing a minimum number of diagnoses during a time period;
10 transmit, during the time period, a plurality of requests to the
11 expert, wherein each request comprises a request for a diagnosis of a physiological
12 anomaly associated with a patient;
13 receive, from the expert, a response to each of the requests;
14 receive, for each response that is an acceptance of the
15 request, the diagnosis for the patient of the request; and
16 cause the compensation amount to be provided to the expert
17 if, at the end of the time period, it is determined that the expert has provided the
18 minimum amount of diagnoses during the time period.

51. A computer readable medium encoded with processing instructions for
implementing a method, the method comprising the steps of:
establishing an agreement with an expert, wherein the agreement
specifies a periodic compensation amount that the expert will receive in exchange
for providing a minimum number of diagnoses during a time period;
transmitting, during the time period, a plurality of requests to the
expert, wherein each request comprises a request for a diagnosis of a physiological
anomaly associated with a patient;
receiving, from the expert, a response to each of the requests;
receiving, for each response that is an acceptance of the request, the
diagnosis for the patient of the request; and
causing the compensation amount to be provided to the
expert if, at the end of the time period, it is determined that the expert
has provided the minimum amount of diagnoses during the time period.

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